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Understanding global/local cultural leadership – issues and methods

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ABSTRACT

Cultural leaders sail between the Scylla and Charibdis of aggregated trans- and supranational cultural-political discourses and the cultural needs of local communities. How do these dynamics influence the work of cultural leaders? How can we understand the work of cultural leaders to connect aggregated political discourses and globalised ideologies to the needs of the local cultural community they cater to?

In a longitudinal research project named CLASP (Cultural Leadership as Situated Practice) a network of European research institutions and field organisations investigates how cultural leaders construct meaning of local and European political agendas, in a practice that requires them to mediate creative autonomy, economy and ideology.

Among the objectives of this research project are the identification of variables which 'smooth' micro-macro translations, and which variables constitute barriers; how cultural leadership capacity can be built and how cultural leaders can shape cultural policy development and co-create transnational strategies for the societal role of the arts.

Keywords:

cultural leadership,
cultural citizenship,
transnational
perspectives,
cultural policy

Introduction

The relationship between artists, cultural organisations and policy makers is considered to be up for a fundamental revision (Douglas and Freemantle, 2009). More specifically, attention is needed to how cultural leaders translate global concerns into local commitment and action, how cultural professionals conflate wider societal and European cultural-political goals with local cultural work, the work ‘that shapes communities’ (Gielen and Lijster, 2015: 34).

This paper introduces the longitudinal research project CLASP (Cultural Leadership as Situated Practice). This research projects aims to investigate how cultural leaders mediate global/local dynamics in their work. The paper will illustrate the central point of this project by discussing two cases of cultural political discourses influencing cultural leadership, one local (Dutch) and one European. Then, the paper will elaborate on theoretical and methodical considerations. The aim of the paper is to open up discussion about the need to address the central dilemma of the project, to share thoughts about the theoretical perspective and methods, as well as expected goals and impacts of the research project.

1. Politics and the arts as leader – a Dutch case



FIGURE 1. COVER OF QUIET 500 AND THE ACCOMPANYING CHILDREN'S MAGAZINE.

In The Netherlands, the recently concluded two year project *The Art of Impact* invited artists to propose work that would make an *impact* on society. The winner of the project was designer Anton Dautzenberg, who produced a magazine entitled *Quiet 500*, a parody of *Quote 500*, which is an annual publication listing Holland's five hundred wealthiest inhabitants. *The Art of Impact* provoked artists to propose work that would realise a true and sustainable change in the system. How exactly the work should be sustainable is not defined, but one effect certainly was the debate and press attention that followed the publication. *Quiet 500* discusses a persistent and discomfiting societal problem, that of (silent) poverty. Apart from texts, the magazine contains visual comments, such as parodies of advertisements (figure 1). For the first edition, all five hundred millionaires listed in the

Quote 500 were approached to participate, either by agreeing to an interview or by giving financial support. Two of them agreed to do so.

The jury wrote (the emphases are added by me): “Anton Dautzenberg conceived and realized a project that turned out to be *sustainable*. A project that uses the rich – their *knowledge*, *skills* and *creativity* – to *participate* in the *Quiet community*, a *market place* without money, with the motto to get, to bring, to *share*. Rich helps poor, poor helps poor”.¹ In its laudation the jury seems to acknowledge that in his work, Dautzenberg reframed keywords characteristic for the present Dutch discourse on creativity, economy,

¹ <http://www.quiet500.nl/anton-dautzenberg-wint-de-impact-award-2016/>. Accessed July 15, 2017.

community and participation. Knowledge, skills and creativity, we can safely say, are presently framed as keys to a sustainable economic community, labeled as a market place. But these *assets*, Dautzenberg seems to say, can just as easily be activated for a (not very vocal, but quiet) community of solidarity, built on such paradoxes as a market place without money, and sharing instead of monetary transactions. Dautzenberg translates central terms from one *logic* to another, and supports this with a cunningly designed “aesthetic reflection”, to coin Scott Lash. The question remains what the jury means with the qualification “sustainable”. Income from sales of the magazine will be made available for projects helping the poor, yet on the other hand it is not likely this magazine will have many sequels to come. Sustainable remains an undefined term.

We can deepen the analysis of this case by including the relationship with the government, and see how the



case illustrates a particular relationship in a particular geographic and cultural context, between government and the arts, or between politicians and artists. After all, artists addressing societal or political dilemmas in their work is nothing new or surprising. But in an international comparison it is probably rare that a national government would make an explicit effort to not only support this activity but also provide a budget for its realization. It leads to all kinds of conundrums, for instance the realization that this generous government is the same government held responsible for not adequately closing the growing gap between the poor and the rich in the first place. Instead of being embarrassed by an artist presenting fundamental critique on the consequences of neo-liberal policy, here is a government that supports the expression of that critique.

FIGURE 2. ADVERTISEMENT IN THE *QUIET 500* FOR THE FRAGRANCE "HOOP!" (HOPE), AS A PARODY OF THE BRAND "JOOP!".

At the time of the Art of Impact project, the Netherlands had a liberal-socialist coalition government, with a socialist minister running the Department of Culture. Dutch socialist cultural politicians in the past have shown a preference for investigating the (emancipating, or subjectifying) relationship between art and society (and typically showing preferences for architecture and film). *Quiet 500* goes further than this. It critiques the consequences of an entire system, even though it respects a limit to the criticism it makes an argument for. *Quiet 500* creates awareness of a painful societal misconception, but it does not criticize a specific government policy. It creates awareness of what neoliberalism or modern capitalism do to human solidarity, but it refrains from naming specific actors that could be held responsible for this development. It creates sensibility for a societal problem among citizens, politicians or millionaires (or any combination of the three) but does not call for revolution. The project makes (artistic) sense of a situation or, in terms of (cultural) leadership, practices a distributive type of leadership by empowering the reader to take a position in a societal debate (Kolsteeg, 2015).

Art of Impact met with substantial criticism from the arts worlds, among which the argument that it created subsidized *pseudo-engagement*. Critics found support for this position in calls voiced at the time (including one by the Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy) for the critical re-evaluation of all attempts to measure effects of the arts in terms of, as well as attempts to enforce connections of the arts with, other policy areas. Among remarks made by artists² is the point that building bridges with society is exactly what artists always do already. The Art of Impact risked to be interpreted, or made sense of, as a Faustian pact. A critical and most of all autonomous position towards politics and political ideologies entails a critical, or at the least suspicious position towards a government facilitating that very position. Keeping low company with that same government jeopardizes artists' autonomy. A counter argument heard among artists was that it's better to stay in contact with a government and possibly change conditions from the inside, than to turn away from it.

Despite the fact that the presentation above of *Quiet 500* and *The Art of Impact* provides a far from complete understanding of the numerous dynamics involved, the case illustrates how this particular manifestation of the relationship between the arts and a government is colored by lingering suspicions of ambiguous government intentions (Barbieri, 2012). It also introduces the central perspective of the research project presented in this paper. CLASP understands cultural leadership of artists, curators, intermediaries (in this case the work of Dautzenberg) as a translational work between global concerns (the uneasy consequences of a political system), local policy (socialist cultural policy creating space for institutional critique) and local cultural practices, such as a yearly, and for some uneasy listing of Dutch millionaires, as well as the tradition of an artistic practice that critically reflects on societal issues. CLASP (Cultural Leadership as Situated Practice) seeks to investigate the complex practice of cultural leaders, i.e. artists, curators or producers, connecting political discourses and globalised ideologies to the needs of the local cultural community they cater to.

2. Tackling dilemmas in the European project

Despite that public and political principles show substantial commonalities when formulated on the level of European member states, McCormick (2010) points at some equally substantial differences in types of "Europeanism" among the populations of those member states. One of the fields in which McCormick observes such differences is that of common values, which he illustrates more specifically by looking at values concerning multiculturalism. McCormick makes the point that while Europeans tend to agree on such far reaching issues as state regulation of markets or social welfare, in moral issues "Europeans are less tolerant of government" (p.168). Focusing on the theme of multiculturalism, McCormick observes that it is a "double-edged sword": "on the one hand, the movement of intellectuals, ideas and culture across borders has been one of the distinctive glories of European identity [...]. On the other hand, xenophobia, racism and intolerance have always been the ugly side of European thinking [...]" (p.169). Despite that it is a European tradition to integrate "core values and features from every group with which its dominant cultures have come into contact" (ib.), there is also an isolationist tendency that reduces multiculturalism to racial and religious

² <https://www.theaterkrant.nl/nieuws/het-meten-van-het-onmeetbare-een-briefwisseling-over-the-art-of-impact/>. A similar uneasiness about the relationship between art and politics characterizes quite a few critiques on Document 14.

characteristics of migrants. In these dynamics, culture, and *Culture with a capital C* seem to have been taken out of the equation.

McCormick points out that these fundamental oppositions are ingrained in the European project. The two positions described above, a unifying European cultural identity and xenophobic fear of the other, are two Hegelian sides of the same coin, and may well be united in one and the same person. While integration of cultures on a humanist level is accepted, there is resistance against migration policies. The fact that we find ourselves in a period where xenophobia threatens to outperform cultural connections is all the more reason to investigate the role of culture in discourses on multiculturalism. The natural occurrence of multitudes in cultural production is an exemplary case in point.

But, going beyond this illustrative point of multiculturalism, what defines the relation between culture and ideology or politics again seems to be the definition of key terms. Europe, culture, multiculturalism, identity, citizenship and integration, lack common definitions (Gordon, 2010), even though they are generally considered clear enough to be used in policy debates. Accepting that these pivotal terms can be highly equivocal, or at least that they are not stable but in a continuous process of “being-made-sense-of”, opens the avenue to create an analytical difference between these terms in the status of accepted, and defined sufficiently to be embedded in a nation’s policy discourse, and the same terms in an equivocal state, operationalized in more fluid discourses (such as a discourse of local identity) in individual citizens’ and artists’ minds. This allows us, to use the term identity again, to see that the concept of European identity can be invoked to argue for a world of transnational cultural unity, and just as easily to argue for closed borders. In fact, it *is* regularly used for both aims.

By giving meaning to these, and many other terms in daily interactions, we connect formal connotations of key terms to our own life-world. And because meaning making is essentially the work of culture, the work that artists, writers, actors, curators, producers, etcetera are engaged with every day, culture is an indispensable intermediary in political sense making, translational and subjectifying dynamics.

The foundation of the relationship between culture as a meaning making force and European discourses has been elaborated by Gielen & Lijster (2015). The authors’ points of departure are the contribution of culture to the autonomy and subjectivation of the individual, and the necessity of a place for political encounter and agonistic discussion. The authors point out how “political-economic developments influence the *meaning* that people assign to their own lives and to living in the community” (43, emphasis in the original). Cultural practitioners contribute to this process of meaning making in a commons or “agora” (Boodt, 2015, after Geert Mak). This agora is the place where through culture we give meaning to our existence, and where cultural leaders, from an autonomous perspective (p.47), contribute to this discussion.

Cultural institutions play a role in this. Over the past decades, cultural institutions have extended their strategies in order to connect civic society concerns such as urban development. This connects to initiatives on the level of global policy (for instance in the Unesco Culture for Sustainable Urban Development

Initiative³, Unesco 2016) and on the level of local initiatives (Schramme et al., 2014). Also societal issues such as social inclusion and civic participation are thematised, again both on a high, or instance European aggregation level in the project Culture for Cities and Regions⁴, as well as on local levels such as in the initiative of the Brooklyn museum in New York to announce specific opening hours for people with Alzheimer. There are endless examples of such societal concerns that can be understood as constituted by a combination of global and local aspect.

3. Unity in diversity – The European project as Case Study

The type of opposition, observed by McCormick, between political and individual deliberations on moral issues, which returned in the reactions of artists to the *Art of Impact* project, also manifests itself in the different projects instigated by the European Union, which can be understood as attempts to create instantiations of Geert Mak's agora. De Boodt (2015) discusses several of these projects, which were created after the realisation, in the early years of this millenium, that culture has an important contribution to make to the European agenda. Europe engaged cultural leaders for *Europe as a Cultural Project* (2002-2004) (73) to engage in discussion. During these discussions cultural diversity is brought up as a necessary and ingrained aspect of the cultural world. Film maker Wim Wenders expressed this on behalf of the film world by saying: "European Cinema is luckily not just one but it is composed of many voices and these voices have something in common that we proudly call European cinema" (quoted in De Boodt, 2015: 75). With his words, Wenders enforces the European motto since 2000, "United in Diversity"⁵. This motto epitomizes the European answer to the question how policy / ideology and individual deliberations relate: they are conflated, but at the same time remain visible.

Agonistic debate in *Europe as a Cultural Project* seems to be far away, and the result of the entire project is largely technocratic: the project resulted in "an extensive report [...] with recommendations for the member states and the European institutions, as well as for international networks" (De Boodt, 2015: 73). A second set of discussions on culture and Europe was organized in the citizens dialogue project (and again subsequent publication) *The Mind and Body of Europe: A New Narrative*⁶. The project involved a large number of high ranking European representatives from the worlds of culture and science to discuss the future of Europe "as a state of mind". De Boodt observes that bringing together politics and culture requires the willingness for politicians and artists to listen to each other (De Boodt, 2015: 80). It also requires, De Boodt posits, a common understanding of terms, bridging the gap between "the language of the eurocracy" and the fragmentation of today's European narrative.

³ <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/culture-and-development/culture-for-sustainable-urban-development/>

⁴ <http://www.cultureforcitiesandregions.eu/culture/home>

⁵ https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/symbols/motto_en

⁶ <https://ec.europa.eu/info/events/citizens-dialogues>

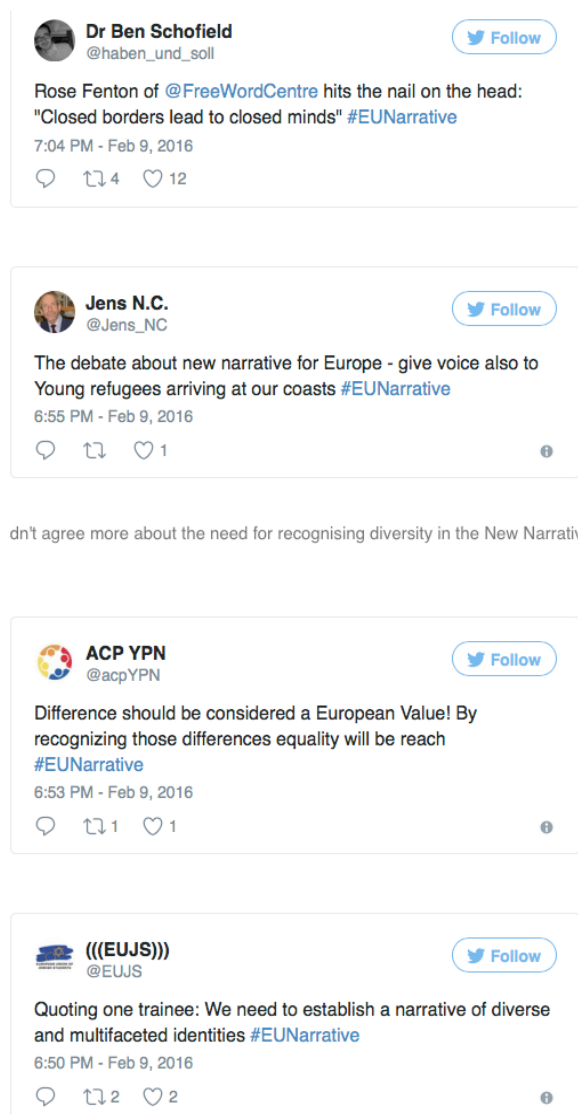


FIGURE 2. REACTIONS TWEETED OUT FROM A CONFERENCE THAT TOOK PLACE ON FEB. 9. 2016, ON THE 'NEW NARRATIVE FOR EUROPE' DURING A SPEECH BY ROSE FENTON, CULTURAL DIRECTOR OF FREE WORD.

Figure 2 shows a random choice of tweets sent out during a conference in February 2016 where young people were invited to provide input for the *New Narrative for Europe* discussions. The topics evoked in this inspirational speech are migration (closed borders lead to close minds; give voice to young refugees), diversity (recognition of difference which will lead to equality) and narrative identity.

The document *The Mind and Body of Europe* – undersigned by an impressive group of cultural leaders⁷ – is positioned as the “response to the call of the European Parliament and of the President of the European Commission to draft a new narrative for Europe for all citizens. We believe that for there to be a true and well-functioning political body in Europe, an understanding of what Europe as a “state of mind” stands for is vital. We also know that a narrative tying Europe’s distant and recent past to the present and providing a vision for the future is equally essential.”

The final conclusions of the document are that Europe “needs brave, imaginative and enlightened political leaders who speak and understand the language of Europe as a political body, animated and energized by culture. Europe also needs artists and scientists, educators and journalists, historians and sociologists, entrepreneurs and civil servants who are prepared to move beyond the comfort of their autonomy to take on new responsibilities towards Europe as a political body. Finally, Europe needs citizens to raise their voices and

to take part in the European public space of debate by sharing their stories and concerns. These narratives will tell the story of what it means to be a European in the 21st century.”⁸ The central terms used in this credo, imagination, language, culture, responsibilities, citizens, public space, narratives, all need explication and translation to a local cultural setting before they can be activated outside “the language of the eurocracy”.

⁷ Kathrin Deventer, Paul Dujardin, Olafur Eliasson, Rose Fenton, Cristina Iglesias, Michal Kleiber, György Konrad, Rem Koolhaas, Yorgos Loukos, Peter Matjasic, Jonathan Mills, Michelangelo Pistoletto, Plantu, Snéska Quaadvlieg-Mihailovic, Thomas Sedlacek, Luísa Taveira.

⁸ https://ec.europa.eu/culture/policy/new-narrative_en

Similar concerns can be raised in relation to subjects thematised in the various European cultural policy agendas such as Horizon 2020. One of them is the call to investigate participatory governance of cultural heritage institutions to improve the relation between cultural governance and the working of culture on personal experience and identity (RICHERS, 2015). The Council of Europe in 2014 underlines the importance of investigating how participatory governance of cultural heritage can contribute to the increase of democratic participation, sustainability and social cohesion.⁹ Looking at the obstacles to be expected on the road towards participatory governance, the brainstorm report *Voices of Culture* (2015) enumerates lack of political will to cooperate or lack of conducive political structures, lack of professional will, conflicts of legitimacy and lack of funding. These obstacles also illustrate the distance between political discourse and daily practice in realising the working of culture in Europe.

Both the New Narrative project and the aim to establish participatory governance for cultural institutions illustrate the scope of the European thoughts on the work of culture. Artists are invited to discuss diversity and narrative identity, cultural institutions are invited to develop structures that increase audience participation in cultural governance.

Both discussions mentioned here were top down initiatives to start discussions about the relation between culture and Europe, and as Boodt remarks, discussions like these will only succeed if a common language for the interlocutors is found. These two observations inform the ambition of CLASP to understand the relationship under scrutiny as a problem of translations. The goal of this project is to better understand the working of the European rhetoric in relation to diverse and possible contradictory local cultural practices. Even though the final articulation of relevant societal themes to be included is part of the research project itself, we can safely speculate that among them we will find such discourses as globalisation, demographic shifts, and cultural identities, as well as the role of cultural institutions in engaging citizens.

A final point that needs to be made here is that we need to be aware of the diversity of organisational entities loci of cultural leadership, and the role of cultural institutions (also Gielen, 2013). The CLASP project will develop a sensitivity for emergent cultural leadership.

Top down

The central point in CLASP is to understand how cultural leaders mediate political discourses (either national or supranational) and local cultural, meaning making practices. We have discussed examples of this mediating work. One, the Dutch example, explicitly requires the creative input of artists, and two European projects invite artists to contribute to an ongoing political debate. Both can be understood as instantiations of an agora of artistic/political debate. Obviously in the first type of projects, the artistic work can be expected to result in a more critical contribution than is possible in the second type of projects. The difference seems to be in the relative cognitive and discursive distance between top down policy-initiatives and bottom-up artistic initiatives. This metaphor of top-down and bottom-up practices evokes the question whether, and if so where these two avenues are likely to meet, and what exactly constitutes the differences of the two avenues.

⁹ [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/NL/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52014XG1223\(01](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/NL/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52014XG1223(01)

Concerning the discourse on cultural integration versus cultural diversity, the government's and citizen positions can drastically differ, and this is true for input of artists too. When put to the test, artists may have activist messages and measures to propose in order to bring about a better world (Bazzichelli, 2014). "Artivism" (Weibel, 2014) may well lead to radical views on such topics as the democratic deficit (Klein, 2013), dominant representation of ideologies (Heissenbüttel, 2014), or globalisation. These views are not likely to be adopted in the debate instigated by Europe. Despite their common ambitions, top-down and bottom-up discourses run parallel but do not easily intersect.

Perspective on local globalization

While globalization can be a topic for critical artistic reflection, at the same time culture itself is in the forefront of that globalization. While mass-migration poses global political challenges, the magnitude of which we can hardly imagine, at the same time in the world of culture the amalgamation of diverse influences is recognized as a signals of vitality. In the world of culture, the theme of global / local relationships is presented in the mediatization and glocalisation of cultural production itself. As Wim Wenders points out earlier in this paper, the global/local contradiction can easily be found embedded in the work itself. Given that realisation, attention is needed for the effects of transnationalisation in the past on the "historical and heuristic reconfiguration of the interdependence of culture, society, and the polity" (Nünning, 2016: 37). Research traditions and practices are in dire need of more awareness of their transnational genealogy themselves, as well as that they are in need of avoiding dominance of western-biased perspectives (Bachmann-Medick, 2016).

Literature on dynamics in global / local relationships shows that a clear view on these relationships is often overshadowed by concerns about finding common definitions (Gordon, 2010; Alasuutari, 2013) and ambiguity in underlying policy and institutional practices (Barbieri, 2012; Dragicevic & Dragojevic, 2005; also Werner & Cornelissen, 2014). Also, much of the existing literature discusses the global/local connection from a generalizing perspective, looking at structural relations between institutions and policy.

Tackling the questions asked in the CLASP project is a challenge when taking a policy-evaluative perspective. The study of the influence of global / political dynamics on cultural practice will then become coloured by definitional problems (Gordon, 2010), by discussions on the adequacy of impact assessment tools (Schindler, 2011), and by a high level of fragmentation of knowledge development. Therefore, the CLASP project examines the quality of the global/local relationship itself in a dynamic network research infrastructure. This infrastructure will offer a framework for studying how macro discourses and micro practices actually relate to each other in governance / cultural leadership frameworks not as a confrontation of structures, but as a translation of concepts between the various levels of perception (Latour, 2005). This perspective acknowledges the dynamic, multifaceted and sometimes paradoxical characteristics of the global / local relationship.

This perspective on the micro/macro relation is described by Langenohl (2016) as a combination of the "local, situational logics of the encounter and the planetary scope of the nodes, hubs and stretches of the networks within which these encounters can take place" (p.107). Langenohl's view on the travel and

translation of concepts and their confrontation in “the encounter” is relevant for this research project because it acknowledges that translation, or transfer of concepts (illustrated above in our case by the translation of concepts from a European discourse to local discourse of cultural practice) is a moment of production of differences. In this radical constructionist view, it’s not “context, understood as ‘cultures’, ‘languages’, or any other rigorously systemised set of meanings, that meet each other. [...] It is only from the angle of the encounter that contexts, cultures, etc. become articulated and reconstructed” (p.106). In other words, “ [...] ‘cultures’ and ‘contexts’ have no existence beyond their relation to encounter” (p.111).

In other words, the translation of cultural political discourses into local practices is understood as localisations of discourses and the production of practices. We look at cultural leadership practice as a cultural phenomenon, and therefore we draw from hermeneutics and cultural studies, sensitive to the relation between practice, values and ideologies, realizing that these ideologies are not stable (Van Heusden, 2017).

Method

This analytical perspective is combined with an evidence-based methodology involving the domains of cultural studies, leadership studies and policy studies. The transdisciplinary method includes representatives of the cultural field and citizens. CLASP brings together a consortium that explores questions of cultural leadership from many different local angles, in which the network allows the necessary comparative work in order to arrive at an aggregated level of understanding.

The project looks at cultural leadership as a cultural activity and not as a managerial, political or economic one, even though political and economic discourses are found to ideologically underpin cultural leadership discourses. Taking cultural leadership practice itself as its object of analysis, the method chosen in the CLASP project evolves around a number of one-year case studies. Each case study contains observations, young scientists training activities and dissemination activities.

The method is transdisciplinary, which implies that the project will go beyond *pure research*. The transdisciplinary aspect of the research objective is seen in the fact that professionals are involved in the research itself. Cultural leaders and researchers will be travelling in exchange programmes. This structure will provide young researchers with methodological and research-management capacities, and it will immediately embed reflections of professionals into the research. In order to expand the network, participants in CLASP will involve adjacent networks to target groups from countries with less capacity in the field. The objective is to establish awareness among cultural leaders, a network through which cultural leaders can continue sharing, reflecting and investigating, and to realise post-graduate training facilities to address needs for professionalisation among cultural leaders. The transdisciplinarity and close connection between researchers and practitioners will introduce elements of Appreciative Inquiry (Barrett and Fry, 2005).

Intermediary findings in the research will be re-entered into the research and will lead to innovation of methods or objectives. The project will investigate case studies following a set protocol. The protocol selects a transnational team of investigators and practitioners. The team will assess the complexity of the cultural /

political and regional situation, including the local genealogy of cultural studies. Aspects for comparison are chosen: practice of leadership (dual, intendant, relationship to local politics, criteria to understand their relationship with larger, European discourses). Critical Discourse Analysis (Lindberg, 2017) will investigate how underlying ideologies impact cultural practice, and how cultural leaders mediate global and local. In an observation of about one year researchers and practitioners from different regions will frequently meet for reflection and input.

CLASP will bring together and involve research communities which do not have the resources to cooperate in concerted transnational research efforts. Partners will also engage rigorous methods of cross cultural comparison, exchanging knowledge from different contexts in order to develop transcultural insights in this field and to provide evidence based advice.

This means that comparisons will be made to identify opportunities and instigate research activities in as yet uncharted regions, in order to realise further expansion of the network. Exchanging researchers as co-readers and observers in the network will provide young researchers with training in research methods and research management. Facilitating connections with stakeholders, cultural leaders, artists, local cultural policy makers and art / culture consumers, who will be included in the observations, will lead to new practices of policy development.

Just as the practice of cultural leadership is highly fragmented, so is the field of knowledge of cultural leadership. International networking is a tool to develop integrated knowledge, but does not aim to work homogeneous practices. Here, too, there is a “unity in diversity” at stake.

Capacity-building objectives

CLASP will seek to provide evidence-based recommendations on cultural policy development and cultural leadership sensitive to micro-macro relations. The capacity-building objectives of this project can be divided in scientific objectives, and professional objectives. The scientific objective of this research project is to capacitate young researchers to apply the project’s perspective to local cultural practice in order to understand bi-directional relationship between global dynamics and local cultural leadership. This leads to the goal of creating a local scientific / practical field that is aware of global agendas, their working on local cultural practice, and the possibility to realize a desired, reflective global / local relationship that adequately connects to local cultural identity. Establishing a network of regional nodes of scientific institutions and sector representatives is a second objective of the project. A network is needed to ensure the effective dissemination of a methodological format to the scientific community for observation of cultural leadership practice in as yet uncharted regions. Lastly, building and sustaining a reliable research network aims to reduce the fragmentation of knowledge development in this field and open up traditional research practices for transdisciplinary and design informed methods.

Through adequate coordination, the network expects to eventually position itself as a partner for conversations on the European Union agendas relating to the development of cultural policies. Also, on a

local level cultural leaders will be equipped to develop cultural policy that is able to address both societal issues and cultural autonomy.

This leads to the professional capacity building objective, which is to further capacitate cultural leaders to shape the relation between cultural practice and cultural policy. Policy Design Workshops will engage cultural leaders, policy makers, citizens and researchers in knowledge-exchange and co-creation, in order to extract models/methods and enhance the multi-stakeholder dialogue. The researchers' network will map, compare and analyse existing meanings of *cultural leadership*. It will identify local indicators which are conducive to assessing cultural impact on societies, and indicators which are or are not conducive to a productive global/local interaction. These indicators will be mapped across the research network and used for building an aggregated model for understanding the investigated dynamics.

The goal of networking is to increase reflexiveness of this practice. Through pooling, sharing knowledge (via offline and online platforms, workshops and conferences), and post-graduate training cultural leaders will receive input for further professionalization based on the needs identified during the project. Research outcomes will be shared through cultural leadership process toolkits.

Conclusion

The CLASP project aims to create an understanding of the encounter of local cultural leadership and global discourses on societal and cultural agendas. Among specific challenges in that encounter are likely to be globalization and migration, citizenship, diversity and identity. The goal of the CLASP project is to better understand the working of the global rhetoric in relation to diverse and possible contradictory local and at the same time fundamentally globalised cultural practices. The project envisions transnational and transdisciplinary case studies.

The impacts expected of this long term research project are building capacities for a new generation of cultural leaders to become pivotal actors in shaping the role of culture in relation to European societal agendas. They will acquire the agency to realize a desired, reflective global / local relationship that adequately connects to local cultural identity.

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